Volume #1

MUSE

July 2024

Thank you to our wonderful editors and contributors

Caspar Nicholson - Editor in Chief
Bruno Elgood Cann - Graphic designer
Mitchell Coles - Editor
Will Kimberley - Fashion Editor
Xavier Newham - Film Editor
Toby Minnett - Arts Editor

Cover image by Sam O'Neil

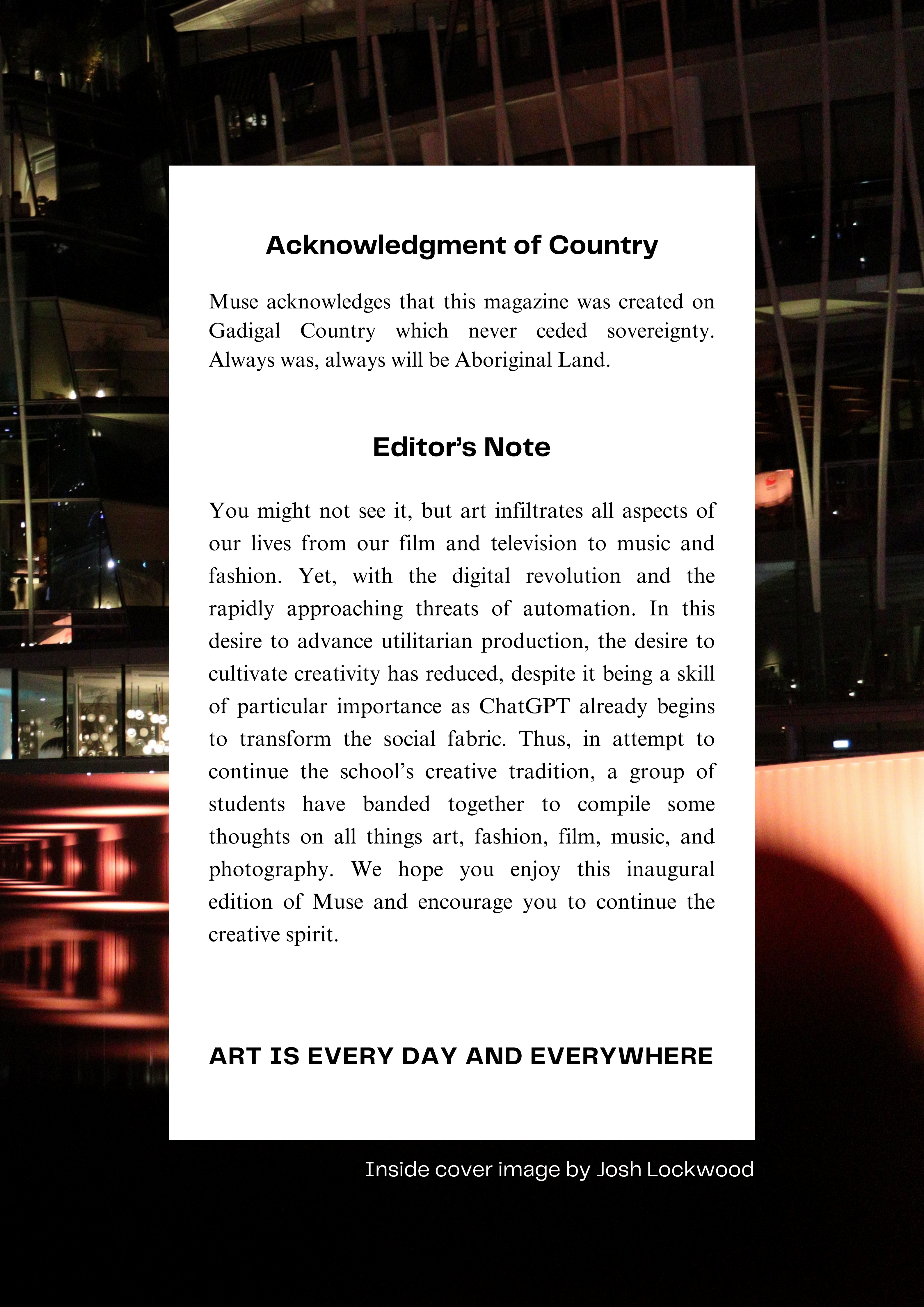
Acknowledgment of Country

Muse acknowledges that this magazine was created on Gadigal Country which never ceded sovereignty. Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land.

Editor's Note

You might not see it, but art infiltrates all aspects of our lives from our film and television to music and fashion. Yet, with the digital revolution and the rapidly approaching threats of automation. In this desire to advance utilitarian production, the desire to cultivate creativity has reduced, despite it being a skill of particular importance as ChatGPT already begins to transform the social fabric. Thus, in attempt to continue the school's creative tradition, a group of students have banded together to compile some thoughts on all things art, fashion, film, music, and photography. We hope you enjoy this inaugural edition of Muse and encourage you to continue the creative spirit.

ART IS EVERY DAY AND EVERYWHERE



Inside cover image by Josh Lockwood

The 2020s in Cinema

Xavier Newham

The 2020s have kicked off with a bang in the world of cinema, delivering a diverse wave of films that tug at our emotions and explore fresh narratives. For this edition of The Muse, I've chosen 3 of my favourite accessible films that represent the best of contemporary cinema: 'The Banshees of Inisherin,' 'Aftersun,' and 'The Holdovers'. Each film offers a distinct feeling, but all share something in common—they give you plenty to discuss and are well worth the watch.

Best British Independent Film – British Independent Film Awards

Best Director – British Independent Film Awards

Best Screenplay – British Independent Film Awards

The Douglas Hickox Award (Best Debut Director) – British Independent Film Awards

Best Cinematography – British Independent Film Awards

Best Motion Picture; Musical or Comedy – Golden Globes

Best Actor; Motion Picture Musical or Comedy – Golden Globes (Colin Farrell)

Best British Film – British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs)

Best Supporting Actor – British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs) (Barry Keoghan)

Best Performance by a Male Actor in a Motion Picture; Musical or Comedy – Golden Globes (Paul Giamatti)

Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role in any Motion Picture – Golden Globes (Da'Vine Joy Randolph)

Best Supporting Actress – Oscar's (Da'Vine Joy Randolph)

Best Original Screenplay – Columbus Film Critics Association (David Hemingson)

The Banshees of Inisherin

2022 • M • Comedy/Drama • Dir. Martin McDonagh • 1h 49m

'Everything was fine yesterday'

Pádraic (Colin Farrell) and Colm (Brendan Gleeson) drinking pints of Guinness, their second film together since their portrayal of two Irish hitmen in 2008's "In Bruges."

Life can feel mundane sometimes. Same boring schoolwork. Same dull people. Same old conversations. Yet, for some of us, routine can be a source of comfort. "**The Banshees of Inisherin**" imagines what would happen if one day you woke up and it all wasn't enough for you anymore, or perhaps more pertinently, it wasn't enough for your best friend.

Pádraic Súilleabháin (Colin Farrell) is a simple man - with a not-so-simple name. He cares for his animals. He loves his sister Siobhan (Kerry Condon). And every day at 2 p.m., he visits his best friend, Colm Doherty (Brendan Gleeson), and the two head to the pub together. One day, Colm decides that he doesn't want to be friends with Pádraic anymore. To the extent that he threatens to cut his own fingers off should Pádraic ever darken his door again. Elsewhere on the island, Barry Keoghan plays the village idiot, Dominic, who is tragic and hilarious in equal measure.

The 'Inisherin' of the title is the name hatched by writer and director Martin McDonagh for the fictional island upon which the whole film takes place. It was filmed on location with various Irish islands standing in for Inisherin. The result begets a gorgeous-looking film in which almost every wide shot is breathtakingly beautiful. The characters that inhabit the island appear to be oblivious to the beauty that surrounds them, instead being content to live out humdrum lives of no consequence. Apart from Colm that is. McDonagh establishes Colm as an expression of the ever-looming fear that there is more to life than this; that creating a legacy and the arts are what give life meaning. Whilst, for Pádraic, simply having the love of your family and friends is enough. McDonagh doesn't choose sides either way, instead allowing the viewer to achieve their own conclusion.

With his latest film, McDonagh has eclipsed all his earlier work, excellent though it is, to create something of real resonance. When first released, I thought it would win Best Picture of 2022, which I was wrong about. Robbed.

Aftersun

2022 • M • Drama/Coming of Age
Dir. Charlotte Wells •
1h 36m

'I can't see myself at 40, to be honest. Suprised I made it to 30.'

Frankie Corio, in her screen debut, and Paul Mescal star in "Aftersun," portraying a father-daughter relationship inspired by director Charlotte Wells' real-life experiences and people from her life.

Memories are like Polaroid photos in reverse, gradually undeveloping. They're distorted half-truths, incomplete pictures coloured by perception, emotion, and time. It's a flawed system, but it's what we have.

In another film from 2022, first-time writer-director Charlotte Wells brings us "**Aftersun**" – a meditation on adolescence, memory, and father-daughter relationships. It follows Sophie (Frankie Corio), piecing together old Polaroids and miniDV footage, trying to remember and understand her father, Calum (Paul Mescal) by reflecting on the shared joy and private melancholy of the holiday she took with her father in Turkey, twenty years earlier.

Present-day Sophie struggles to see him clearly, with so many shots in the film being of Calum's face abstracted by strobe lighting and the harsh Turkish sun. Calum's elusive sensibility becomes symbolic of his struggles with fatherhood, money, and his disdain for where he is at the age of 30. You observe him suffering in silence, trying to hide his depression, whilst juggling a strong fatherly façade for Sophie, which complicates things for her as an adult as she struggles to align the father she remembers, with the man she never truly understood.

Coming-of-age is a complicated process, Wells' stirring script is warm and nuanced and it aches with a nostalgic longing for a return to childhood. The film details the flashes of the past that sometimes invade our present with no warning or explanation. The rush of powerful involuntary memories and difficult emotions that the simple smell of seawater can inspire, ultimately delivers one of the saddest films I've ever seen.

I've been a fan of Paul Mescal – who is brilliant in this – since watching his performance in the 2020 TV series, "**Normal People**" and I look forward to him starring in "**Gladiator II**" in November later this year.

The Holdovers

2023 • M • Comedy/Drama
Dir. Alexander Payne
2h 14m

'History is not simply the study of the past. But an Explanation of the present'

'Many of the film's most affecting moments are dialogue-free': Dominic Sessa and Paul Giamatti as Angus Tully and Paul Hunham in "The Holdovers".

From speaking to my teachers, teaching is tough. It's a profession that demands patience, resilience, and the ability to connect with students on a personal level. "**The Holdovers**" joins the ranks of classic teacher-student movies like "**Good Will Hunting**" and "**Dead Poets Society**", but unlike those classics, it doesn't feature Robin Williams. Director Alexander Payne's new film, which reunites him with his "**Sideways**" star Paul Giamatti, however, transcends this familiar territory to offer its own unique charm and depth.

Decked out in a corduroy blazer, walrus moustache, and bowtie, Paul Hunham, a grumpy ancient history teacher (Paul Giamatti), appears to delight in failing the rich brats in his charge. However, after refusing to pass the knucklehead son of a generous school donor, he finds himself given the unwanted task of caring for a group of "Barton Boys" who remain at the New England all-boys prep school during the 1970 winter holiday break.

"At least pretend to be a human," the school headmaster begs Paul. "It's Christmas."

Initially, there are five students under his supervision — until four of them are whisked away in a private helicopter for an impromptu ski trip, leaving only Angus Tully (Dominic Sessa) at Barton. Alongside the school cook, Mary Lamb (Da'Vine Joy Randolph), who is still grieving at the recent loss of her son in Vietnam, Paul and Angus are forced to form an uneasy alliance to navigate the holiday season.

Unexpectedly, the formation of this trio becomes the vehicle for which the triad can attempt to resolve their private issues; the deep sadness of a recently bereaved mother, a boy struggling with his familial responsibilities, and a lonely teacher who has developed a destructive instinct to push people away. The result is electric chemistry, with all three delivering excellent performances. The film's heartwarming message is mirrored in its fantastic set design and remarkable use of color. The cozy yellows and rich mahogany browns stand out against the sharp white of the snow and sky, creating a colour scheme that's as inviting as a crackling winter fireplace.

Though not strictly a Christmas film, "**The Holdovers**" captures the essence of what Christmas represents without becoming cliched or overly sentimental. Whilst the film is a little predictable and not afraid to wear its heart on its sleeve, it's a great film to watch or rewatch with the family in December.

A definite and instant Christmas classic.

Art in a digital society: An exploration of Lina Deng's work

Toby Minnett

Lina Deng is a young British-Chinese artist making installation and sculpture work inspired by online internet phenomena, subculture, and humour, self-describing her work as "an accumulation of online brainrot". Deng investigates these flashpoints in online culture in the context of their wider societal implications, investigating topics varying from looksmaxxing, British post-colonial identity, and Tiktok's iconisation of Chinese women. Through an ironic and philosophical lens, Deng's work attempts to challenge the internet age's irreverent attitude towards meaning and symbolism, and brings the ideologies and consequences lying dormant in online phenomena to the forefront of consciousness.

worship at the altar of an e-girl (2022)

worship at the altar of an e-girl seems to unpack the deification and idolisation of women, or e-girls, on the internet, through an installation that imagines a future society wherein "disjointed knowledge archives of e-girls have transmuted these avatars of internet subculture into deities of worship". The installation is interactive, and extracts pulse-data from viewers that unifies our bodies with the e-waste present in the installation, creating a sort of ritual-performance that evokes questions around obsession, desire, and intimacy on the internet.

bottoms up and the devil laughs (2022)

bottoms up and the devil laughs is a sculptural installation consisting of a monster energy drink fountain. The title references a popular online video wherein a preacher attempts to convince the viewer that monster energy is satanic. Through this work, Deng attempts to investigate "the anti-corporeality of gaming culture and the configuration of gender, mysticism and productivity under neoliberalism". Essentially, Deng grotesquely parodies the feeling of constantly being wired or caffeinated in our modern society, and the draining feeling of alertness, omnipresent connection, and productivity demanded by our current stage of societal capitalism.

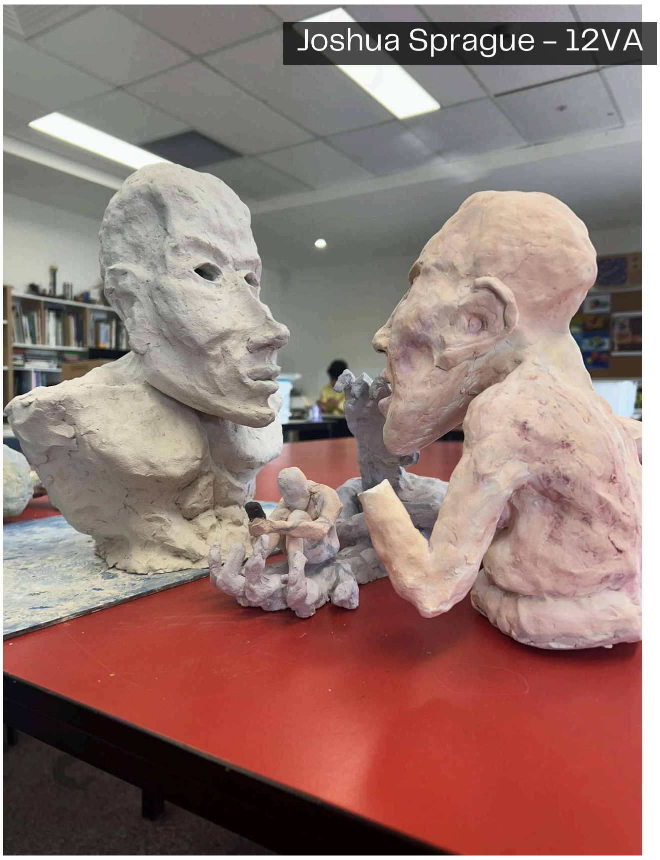
fully automated luxury communism (2023)

fully automated luxury communism, is an admittedly bizarre sculptural installation featuring projection and video that investigates the increasing cross-contamination between the magical and the technological in online subculture. Deng draws on Posadist philosophy, which suggests that aliens encouraged humans to start socialist thought, manipulating this using trends like cyber sigilism graphic design and wojaks, to seemingly critique the utopian design of the internet.

british people aren't real (2024)

british people aren't real is Deng's latest sculpture, featuring a bearded gnome buried in sand, holding a can of beer and a packet of "crisps", sporting stereotypical british attire like a newsboy cap, adidas sambas, a sport jersey, and a trench coat covered in pins supporting the monarchy. The work is followed by the simple tagline "the postcolonial melancholic doesn't (just) refuse to accept change; at some level, he refuses to accept that change has happened at all". From this, we can understand the work as utilising stereotypes of "Britishness" popularised on the internet to represent a new, unstable British identity, where through the form of relic, the once-dominant colonial superpower's identity is fading into obscurity; into memes.

Henry Adams – 12VA

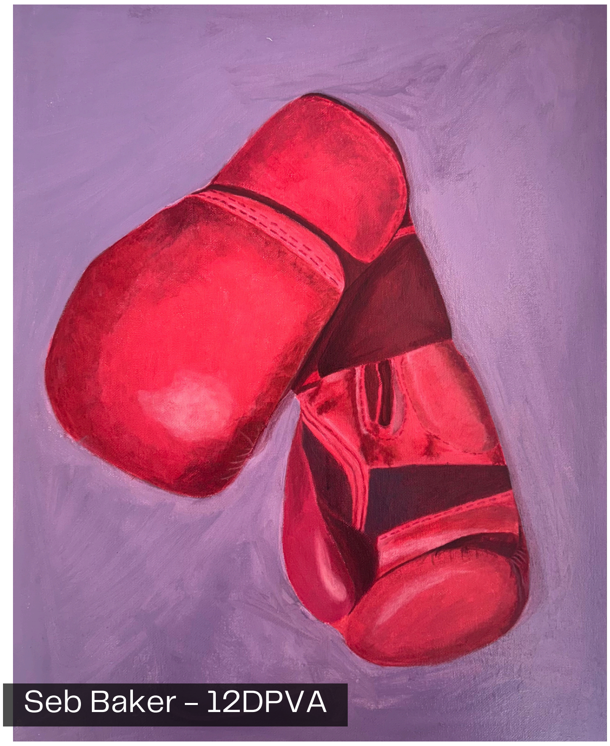


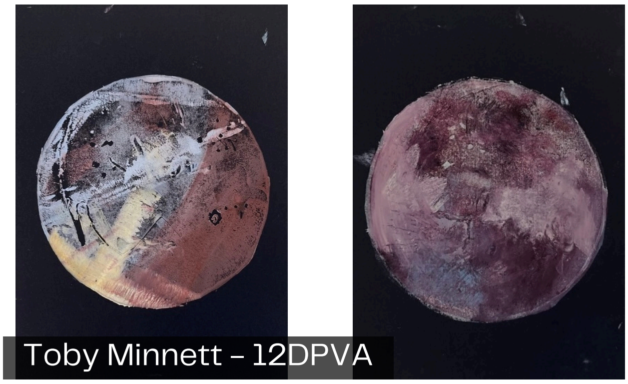
Joshua Sprague – 12VA

Year 12 Student Artworks

Alex Murdoch – 12DPVA

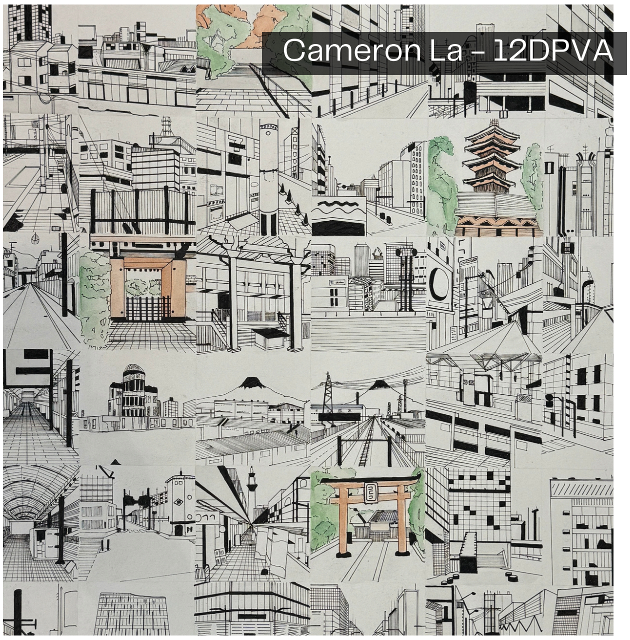
Seb Baker – 12DPVA

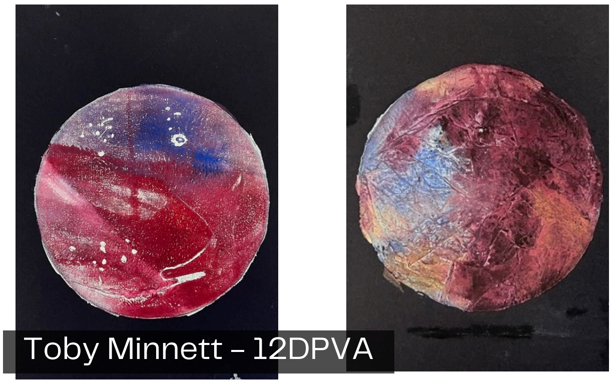

Seb Baker – 12DPVA


Toby Minnett – 12DPVA

Mitchell Coles – 12VA

Toby Minnett – 12DPVA


Cameron La – 12DPVA


Toby Minnett – 12DPVA

Lucian Johnson – 12VA

How Social Media Weaves the Fabric of Streetwear Culture

Will Kimberely

It must be said foremost that the current state of streetwear is something of complete opinion. A multiplicity of factors within the creative vocation go into ensuring the dynamic environment of fashion and I am purely reciting my take on a large contributor to this field. Good, now that I've ensured my audience has completed at least year 9 NAPLAN and not already fried their dopamine receptors let me show you what you're missing out on in the world of streetwear and why social media and its consequences have been a disaster for the fashion world.

In September 2016, TikTok, originally known as Musical.ly, was launched by Chinese tech company ByteDance garnering low users at first, this would later all change in 2018. Estimated to have jumped from 100 million monthly users to 500 million between 2017 and 2019, TikTok's rise to fame can be attributed to its addictive and digestible short-form content, in addition to its powerful algorithm that personalised the user experience. By 2020, TikTok had become one of the most downloaded apps globally, solidifying its place as a major player in the social media landscape.

Now due to how effectively trends brainwash interests in rare cases you can catch people that still remain open to wearing less popular pieces that still carry similar styles and aesthetics attributed to the existing trends. No need for pandabuy, no need for tiktok, the brands I'm about to mention are relatively still niche within the growing streetwear market and as such remain affordable.

1. **five by flynn -** Launched in 2019 by Louie Collins, five by flynn caters to the Australian streetwear scene like no other. The brand's retro aesthetic and incorporation of Australian culture within their pieces establishes a unique image surrounding their pieces, and the minimalistic high quality designs makes it an easy wear for a number of occasions. The price point fits well with the brands quality, with most shirts and shorts costing $90, five by flynn is a staple of what quality Australian streetwear looks like.

2. **NEVERE EVERN -** Portland based brand NEVERE EVERN going by @youngchickenpox on Instagram possesses designs bound to catch your interest. Taking heavy inspiration from Stüssy, NEVERE EVERN has produced a range of pieces, from fleece’s to footwear, the unique wave inspired aesthetic stands out in the boundless sea of streetwear. Due to the singular owner, the website only takes pre-orders, but I can confidently say this brand deserves more recognition and would be perfect for those in favour of a more niche style which retains elements of popular streetwear.

3. **Sickö -** Founded by Ian Connor, associate of rapper Playboi Carti, Sickö definitely has some of the most wearable and infectious designs within contemporary streetwear. Similar to Corteiz, and MinusTwo their designs cater to more modern streetwear aesthetics, yet they continue to adapt and interpret pop culture and music within their pieces ensuring that each piece retains a ‘timeless’ look. The pricing of Sicko is the only downside, but for those interested in Y2K/Futuristic streetwear, not only I can guarantee you would like Sickö but it is a very good, perhaps better alternative to current popular Y2K streetwear.

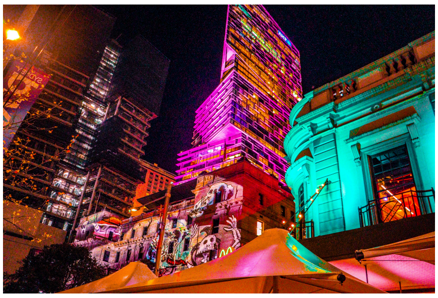
There you have it, do what you will with this information. In hopes of not walking through the city and seeing the same exact outfits every time I hope this broadens your horizons surrounding what is ‘good’ streetwear. Don’t forget, (unlike me) in order to avoid repeating the same mistakes of TikTok fashion, you must gatekeep! I have even provided an explicit definition from the Oxford Dictionary in case some of you don’t know it.

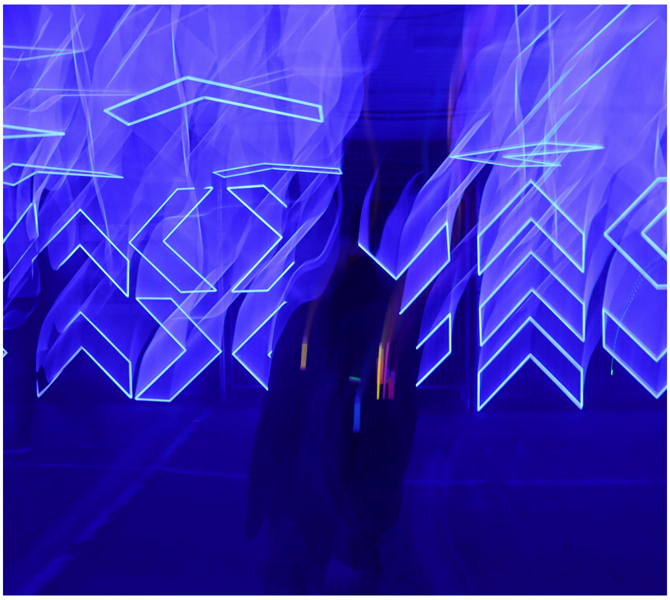
gatekeeping /ˈɡeɪtˌkiːpɪŋ/

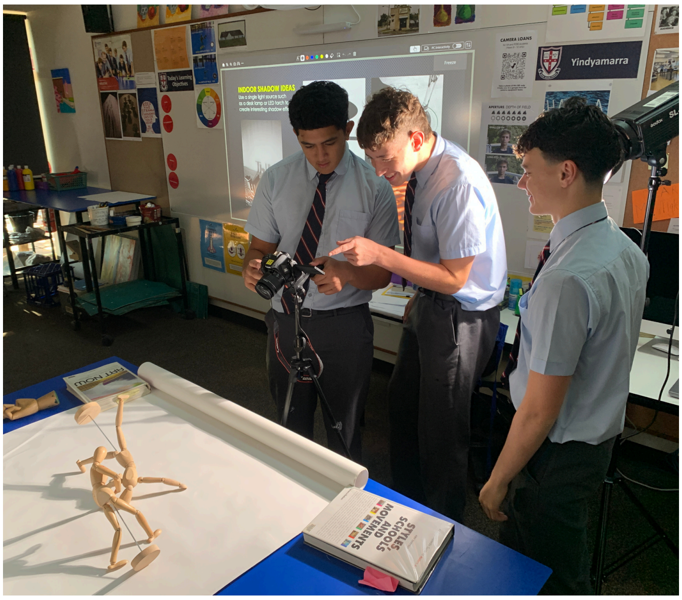
the activity of controlling, and usually limiting, general access to something.

"Wal-Mart's cultural gatekeeping has served to narrow the mainstream for entertainment offerings"

Senior Photography



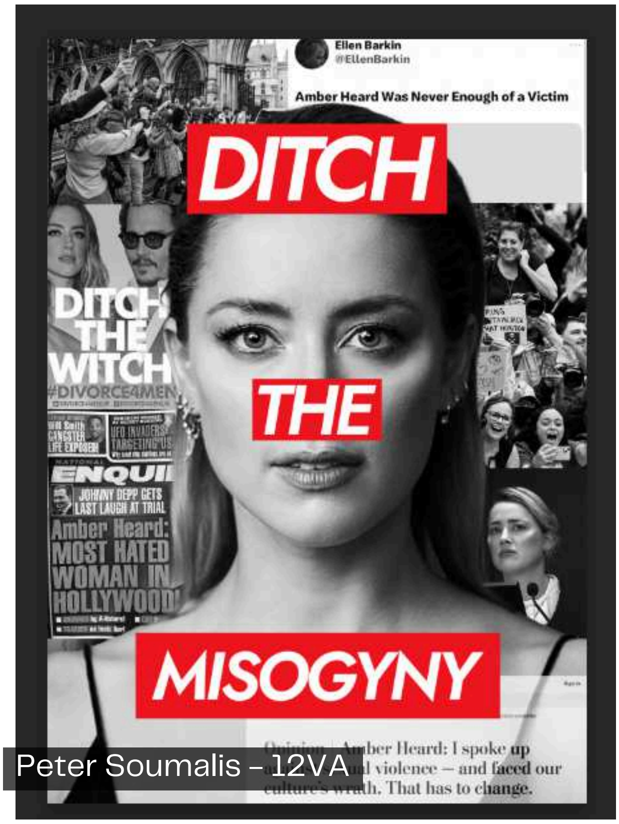




Jonathan Zhang – 11DPVA

Peter Soumalis – 12VA

Senior Artworks



Peter Soumalis – 12VA

Jonathan Zhang – 11DPVA

From Graffiti to Manga: The Pop Figure

Caspar Nicholson

Ever since graffiti freed itself from the walls of a Philadelphia juvenile prison in the 1960s and made its way onto the streets, it has enthralled the contemporary art world. Beginning with Darryl “Cornbread” McCray who began to tag the churches, schools, town halls, and bathrooms of Philly, the modern graffiti style made its way to New York City. It was popularised by New York artists like Taki 183 and Lady Pink whose counter-cultural purposes lent themselves to the style. Graffiti reached its mainstream peak in the 90s when the street art of contemporary art’s-darling Basquiat made it onto the walls of the world’s most prestigious galleries. Alongside him was his long-time collaborator and friend Keith Haring, whose graffiti pop art become a widely recognisable visual language. Following the recent renaissance of the art of these 80s megastars, Haring’s ‘radiant baby’ illustration seems to be most in vogue.

Keith Haring, an icon of the 1980s New York City graffiti scene, emerged as a beacon of creativity amid the urban cacophony. His works pulsate with kinetic energy, as if every line and curve were imbued with the rhythm of the streets. Haring's figures, rendered in bold strokes and primary colours with a childlike exuberance. Haring's characters cavort across the surface, their bodies contorted into dynamic poses that suggest a boundless vitality with their frenetic gestures and vibrant colours, exude a sense of joyous abandon that is impossible to ignore

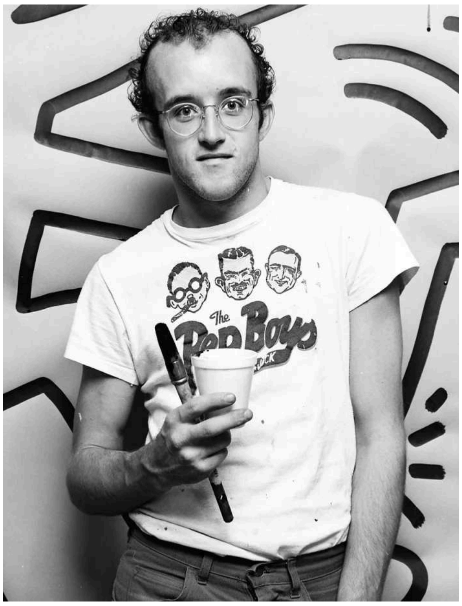
Haring’s ‘radiant baby’ is an iconic emblem of the Pop Art movement: simple, pulsating with energy, and symbolically rich. In this work, Haring encapsulates the essence of Pop Art's fascination with the human figure through a simplistic yet profound depiction that transcends conventional boundaries. At first glance, the "Radiant Baby" appears as a playful and childlike rendering, characterised by bold lines, bright colours, and a lack of intricate detail. However, beneath its innocent exterior lies a profound commentary on the human condition and society's relationship with mass media. Thus Radiant Baby exemplifies Pop Art's tendency to appropriate and reinterpret familiar imagery from popular culture.

In depicting the human figure, the exaggerated proportions and features reflect the influence of comic books, graffiti, and advertising – mediums that Haring himself was deeply immersed in. However, following Haring’s unfortunate death in 1990 to AIDS, his pop art movement was quickly picked up on the other side of the globe: Japan. The Far East after undergoing decades of Westernisation, now positioned itself as the avant-garde capital of the globe as its Eastern artistic tradition began to hybridise itself with Western sensibilities

In contrast, Yoshitomo Nara, a contemporary Japanese artist, conjures a world suffused with a sense of quiet introspection. His figures, often depicted with large, luminous eyes and enigmatic expressions, evoke a sense of haunting familiarity. Nara's mastery lies in his ability to infuse his characters with a haunting presence, as if each one harbors a universe of secrets behind its inscrutable gaze. There is a palpable tension in Nara's work, a delicate balance between innocence and menace, that lures the viewer into a realm where the mundane and the surreal coalesce.

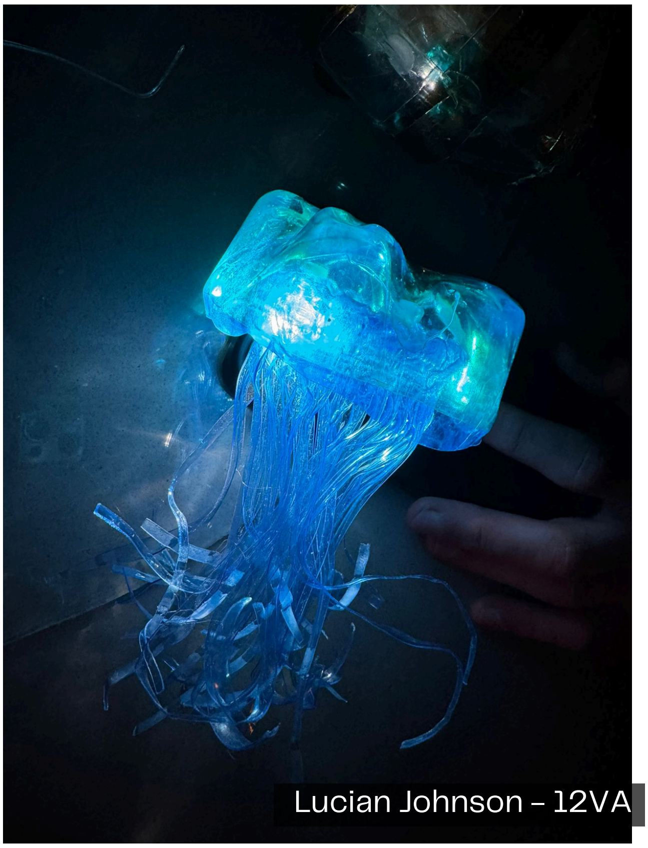
Despite their disparate backgrounds and artistic sensibilities, Haring and Nara share a deep affinity for the power of simplicity. Both artists distil complex emotions and ideas into deceptively straightforward forms, inviting viewers to delve beneath the surface Haring's iconic figures, with their bold outlines and elemental shapes, resonate with a universal accessibility that transcends cultural boundaries. Likewise, Nara's enigmatic characters, with their minimalist features and expressions, speak to the allure of the human ambiguity. Nara's art is marked by its subtlety and restraint, its quiet intensity atracting the viewer.

Moreover, Haring and Nara use their figures as conduits for exploring issues of identity, power, and alienation. Haring's work, deeply rooted in the urban landscape of 1980s New York City, serves as a poignant reflection of the socio-political turmoil of the era. His figures, often depicted in scenes of protest, embody the spirit of resistance and that defined the zeitgeist with their graffiti-inspired aesthetic and urban sensibility. Contrasty, Nara's art, influenced by post-war Japan, speaks to the profound sense of disillusionment that permeates Japanese society and reflects the rich tapestry of Japanese tradition with their manga-inspired features that evoke a sense of timeless mysticism.

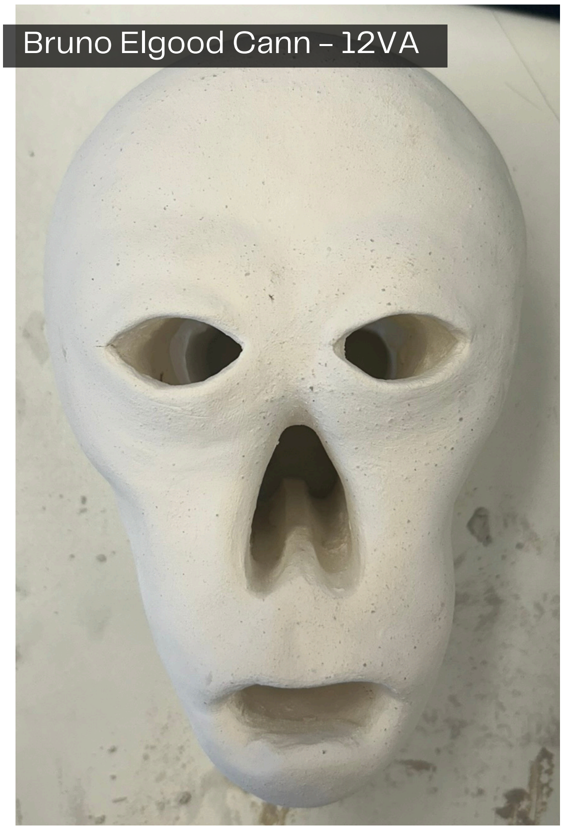


Despite hailing from different cultural backgrounds and periods, their art converges upon a shared fascination with the pop style figures. Haring and Nara beckon viewers into realms where innocence dances with the enigmatic, where simplicity belies profound depths. Through their bold strokes and enigmatic expressions, Haring and Nara invite viewers to embark on a journey of discovery, where innocence dances with the enigmatic, and simplicity belies profound depths

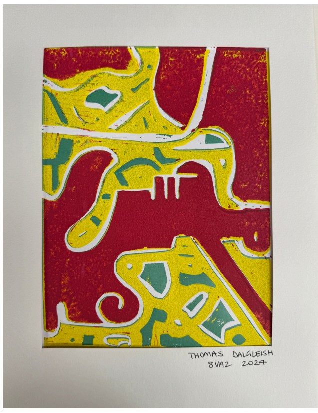
Lucian Johnson – 12VA

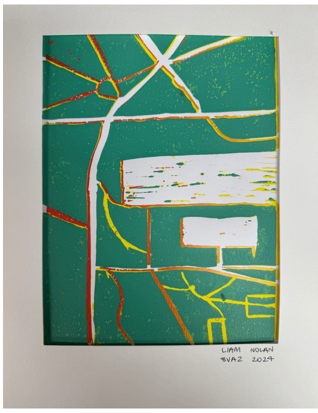

Lucian Johnson – 12VA

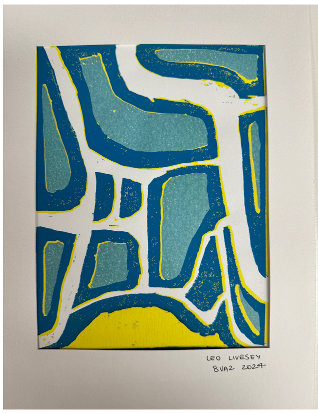
Year 12 Student Artworks


Bruno Elgood Cann – 12VA

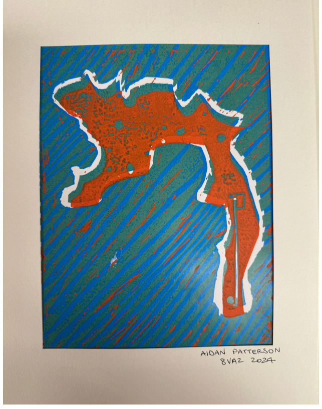
Toby Minnett – 12DPVA

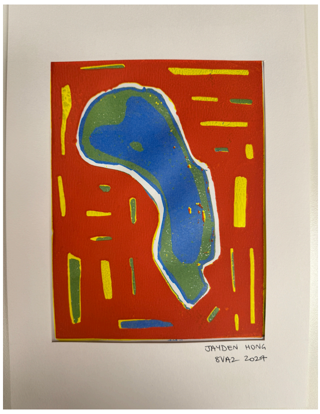


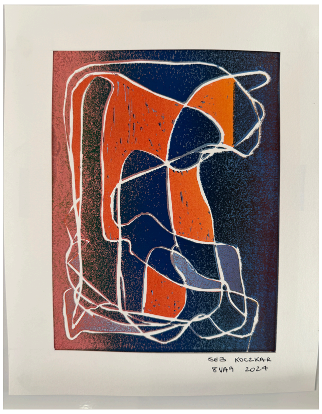


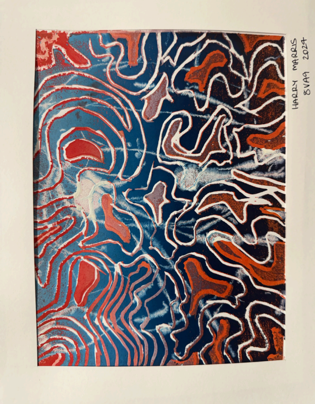


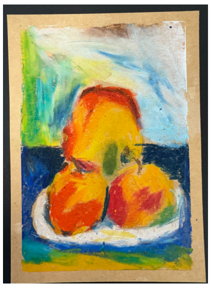
8VA Landstory Prints



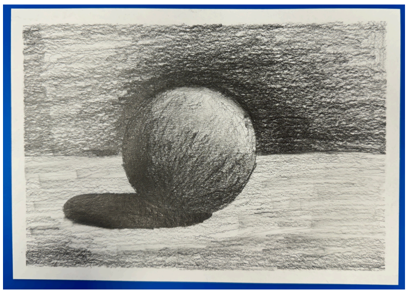




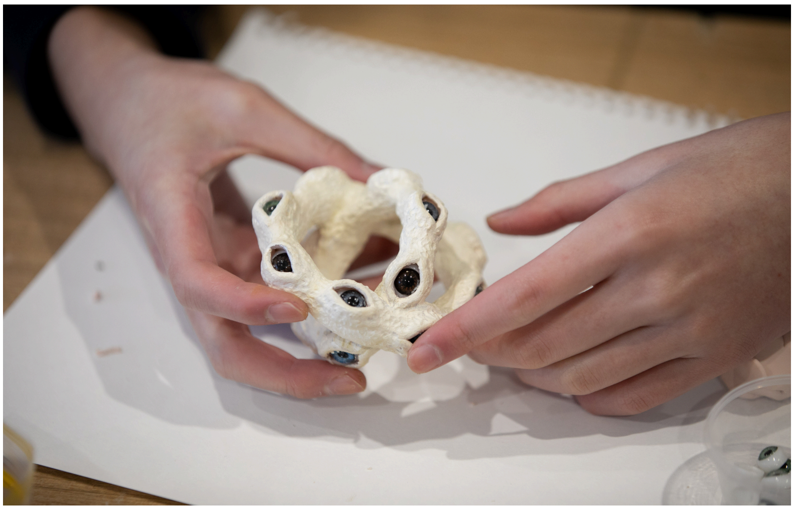




7VA Still Life



10VAD
Character Models



Year 12

STUDIO

DAY

2024